make to free themselves. The fishermen grab them and throw them in their baskets. [95]

Sometimes the natives enclose an area on the grassy banks, move into it, and search the grass for fish. If the fish try to break away for the main channel, they are caught in the meshes of the net.

3) Fishing with screens. This method is the most common. It is easier and more productive than the others. The screens are made of long splints of rattan or raffia, placed parallel to each other one or two centimeters apart. The cross elements of rattan are spaced from 20 to 30 centimeters apart. The height of the screens varies from 66 centimeters to 2.50 meters, and their length from 10 to 20 meters. These screens are used as dams in the river, marshes, coves, and at the mouths of small tributaries. They are fastened to stakes and sunk perpendicularly into the river bed. The natives set them up when the waters first begin to recede. A little upstream of the screens, they throw into the river a number of branches, still bearing their leaves, in such a fashion as to provide a shelter for the fish stopped by the screen. When the water is very low, the natives go a very great distance upstream. They enter the water, form a tight chain, and work methodically downstream toward the screen. All the fish are driven toward it. At 25 or 30 meters from the screen, the natives put another screen in the water. Some of the fishermen are assigned to hold it vertical. The others enter the enclosure formed by the two screens, take out the sheltering branches and grass, and begin to hunt the fish. They have openwork baskets shaped like a truncated cone. The fisherman, with the basket in front of him, sets it down on the river bed, the large opening toward the bottom. If a fish is trapped in the basket, the fisherman can tell by the light bumps against the sides caused by the fish trying to escape. The fisherman plunges his hand into the basket through the top opening, gropes about inside, seizes the fish, breaks its backbone, and throws it into the canoe or on the bank.

The catch is carried to the temporary village, and the fish are gutted, cleaned, and thrown on the apparatus for smoking them. This is a [96] grid made with rattan of average thickness, which rests on crossbars placed on forked stakes planted in the ground.

1: Maes--71 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32
Salata F043

The average height is 1.25 meters, the width 2.50 meters, and the length five to ten meters. The women maintain a fire under this smoking-drying apparatus night and day. It is fed with grass and other rubbish, which are not very dry so that a great deal of smoke will be produced. All the fish are turned over twice a day. After eight to ten days the operation is finished. The dried, smoked fish are carefully wrapped after being sorted and graded according to size. Part of the fish will make up the family reserve, and the rest will be used as trade goods. When the grid

Fig. 57. Baskets for Fishing, Lake Leopold II.

is almost empty, the men go up the river and start fishing again.

It is difficult to realize the magnitude of this industry and the unbelievable quantities of fish caught by the natives during their sojourn in the region of the salt grass. We watched one of these miraculous hauls one day, organized through the kind cooperation of Mr. Molin. The river had been dammed for only one night, the natives went up it only 150 [97] meters, this in the middle of the dry season, and yet they brought back four large baskets full of fish.

The catch from communal fishing is shared at the end of the season. A part is reserved for the chief, the owners of the screens receive a special share, and the rest is divided among all the members of the group participating in the enterprise. [Ed., a

M 415 however, shows us that aside from this generally uniform character these different tribes each have their own distinctive pottery. In our opinion the latter should be regarded as a derivative from the original form, known and used by the principal ethnic branch of these various peoples. Each of them has modified the original form according to its tastes, its conceptions, and local circumstances and needs, to the point where each people developed a special and characteristic form that retained only two essential elements of the original: the more or less marked curve of the sides, and the inward, horizontal rim.

M 415 531 Among the Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and Yaelima, the shape of the small pieces of pottery used for preparing meat is altogether different. Here we find neither a regular curvature of the sides nor an inward, horizontal rim. On the contrary, the bottom is a spherical calotte, the body distinctly angled with a sharp edge, the upper surface decorated with incised drawings, and the rim slightly sloping and curved outward. The decoration is the same as that we noted on the pottery for chikwangue in this region.

M D 415 531 Farther east, among the Basongo-Meno and Bankutshu, the shape is again quite different. The sides, which slant obliquely inward and have no rim, meet the round bottom at a sharp angle. They usually have considerable decoration with incised drawings and even some molding in relief.

M ●251 To preserve meat, the natives proceed in two different ways.

For small quantities, the meat is cut into pieces weighing from one to three kilograms, impaled on a stick, and roasted over [132] a low fire. This procedure does not give very good results. Meat smoked in this way spoils after five or six days, but this does not keep the native from eating it. "It's the meat and not the smell that I eat," he says, "for after the meal the meat is gone and the smell is still with us!"

To store large quantities, the meat is cut into pieces weighing from half a kilogram to one kilogram and then boiled over a brisk fire for a little less than an hour in rather salty, well-spiced water. The pieces are then smoked on a large grid, usually set up in the center of the village. This grid, made of large rattan stems and green branches, rests on four forked stakes 90 centimeters to 1.20 meters high. A woman keeps a slow fire burning under the

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● 251 grid, which gives off a great deal of smoke. The boiled meat is lightly packed and covered with large banana leaves. It remains on this grid for two or three days. At the end of this time, it is thoroughly smoked, black as coal, dry, and tough, but it keeps almost indefinitely.

The housewife takes her supply and puts it in the storage place inside her hut, where it is safe from the rats, mice, and other marauders which infest the native huts.

Fig. 75. Communal Smoking Apparatus.

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415 The meat is usually cooked in large earthenware vessels. [133]

Among the Bateke and Banfumungu, these vessels are shaped like irregular spheres with the top cut off.

Among the Baboma and Basakata, on the other hand, this pottery is cylindrical in form, broad, of moderate height, and has a flat bottom. Among the Bobaie, Balesa, and Batete, the bottom is rounded, broad, and shallow, and it extends into a rather high neck in the shape of a truncated cone, decorated with very even and not very artistic impressed designs. The body has sharp edges, and the small rim has a wide flare. This form is found among the Basakata, although less frequently. It seems to be quite common in the region of the Kundu [Nkundu], northern neighbors of the Bobaie, Balesa, and Batete.

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[531]

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415 The Ipanga and Yaelima use pottery vessels similar to those
531 they use for making chikwangue, while the Basongo-Meno and

Bankutshu use a bell-shaped form; the bottom is a spherical calotte, the body slightly curved, and the decoration consists of heavy moldings, both sunken and in relief.

These same pots are also used by all these tribes for preparing and cooking fish.

The riparian peoples of the Congo-Kasai-Fimi and of the lower Lukenie, as well as the Wadia and Mongongere of the Boriempe-Lulonga, fish a great deal.

Fish is never eaten raw. The natives boil it or eat it dried or smoked.

To preserve fish, the natives smoke it on large grids similar to those they use for smoking meat.

Certain peoples, notably the tribes of the Fimi and lake region and of the lower Lukenie, also use a special form of pottery, rare and heretofore unknown. We were able to bring back only two specimens, which are fortunately very characteristic. [134]

This form is open at the base and closed at the top by a large disk pierced with holes. The sides are curved. The diameter of the bottom opening is a little smaller than that of the upper disk. It varies from 45 to 30 centimeters.

This drying pot, called kenge by the natives, is placed on three pieces of wood forming a tripod. Under the tripod a woman maintains a slow fire of leaves, grass and green wood, which sends thick smoke inside the pot. The gutted fish are placed over the disk. They are left there for four or five days, exposed

Fig. 78. Raffia Belt.

continually to the action of the fire and smoke. At the end of this time they are sufficiently smoked and dried to keep for several months. Naturally, these pots can be used [135] for preparing and preserving only small quantities of food. They form a part of the native house wife's equipment among these various tribes. She also uses them to smoke chikwangue, to dry bananas, manioc tubers, and ears of maize, and sometimes to smoke meat. The manioc tubers, bananas, ears of maize, and other vegetable

1: Mass--98 E-5 (1913-1914) 1924 FO32 Mongo FO32

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•251 products to be dried are not exposed to heavy smoke, but to a small fire of very dry wood producing a low, hot flame, or, if possible, to the heat given off by a glowing bed of charcoal.

When completely prepared, protected, and wrapped in leaves, the chikwangue are laid above the kenge for six to eight hours, while the housewife maintains a charcoal fire underneath. When dried and smoked in this way, the chikwangue keep a very long time.

Lacking a kenge, a woman sometimes uses a pottery vessel with a flat bottom, pierced with small holes, and vertical sides.

[49]

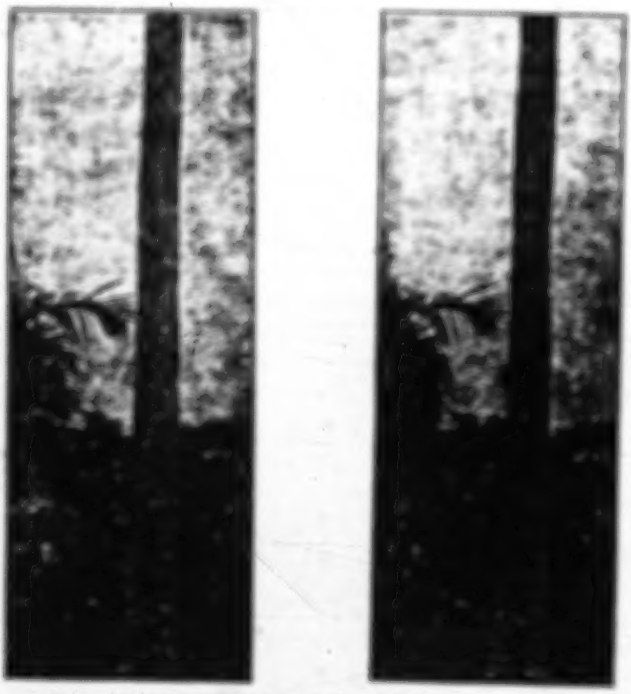

Fig. 77. Two Ways of Climbing Trees.

This fits on top of an old chikwangue pot, mpoko-kepinga, whose bottom has been broken.

The mpoko-kepinga is placed over the fire. The woman seals the juncture between the mpoko-kepinga and the kenge with the pierced bottom, using a paste of clay and potter's earth.

583 431 [412] on the husband's wealth). Theoretically, the knife should be an efamba. In practice it is sometimes possible to substitute an empete in an attractive wooden sheath amply adorned with "copper-plated nails." At other times the knife and spears may be replaced by their corresponding value in bakonga. This is considered the most important [675] boengo, and therefore no one gives up his claim to it. If the son-in-law cannot present it to his father-in-law immediately, he promises to do so later, and his father-in-law does not fail to make use of any opportunity to remind him of his promise. Some men insist on a wɛ̌ko as pledge. Others are satisfied with a piece of loasi or a boɔngɔ (splinter or part of the trunk of a palm tree), which the husband gives to the ndonga as a token of acknowledgement of his debt and as evidence of his willingness to pay it as soon as he has the means. Some men, however, insist so strongly on the boengo that they will not accept the walo [146] before they have received it. Thus, one day recently, Lomanga d'Ifunɔ (Bongɛ̌li) refused to accept the walo for his daughter Ekofo, engaged to Bokungɛ́ w'akɛ́yɛ́ (of Bongɛ̌li, Ndongɔ). He insisted that the father of the latter, Bokungɛ́ w'is'ɛ́y'-Ingilɛ́ first go back to get his boengo. Since he was unable to find five spears, he substituted for them a second knife and a copper ring; these were accepted by old Lomanga. Shortly thereafter the same thing happened to Bokungɛ́ of Bontole (Bongɛ̌li), who wanted to pay the walo for his fiancée Ngelɛ́ of Bɔmbo (Bombwanja), the sister of Bongondɛ́, clerk of the Bombwanja. The woman's family refused to take the bride price before receiving the ifakɛ́ l'akongɛ́ b'is'ɛ́y'ɔna boengo.

2) Byɛ̌kɔ́ byɛ́ nyang'ɛ́y'ɔna, "porcupines for the mother." ● [251] This present consists of two or three fresh or smoked porcupine. Bɛ́tomba, baatɛ́ birds, or bekɔ́sa fish may be substituted for them. The substitution of hens is not well regarded, because they are within the realm of the nkomɛ̌. If someone does not have the means to satisfy this requirement, he gives the mother two copper rings saying mɛ́kɛ́ bakonga bɛ́lɛ́ yɔombe byɛ̌kɔ́ bikɛ̌, "here are two copper rings; go and buy yourself some porcupines." Fabrics are sometimes substituted nowadays.